

(Mr. MEEK addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PETERSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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ERECTING AN EDIFICE FOR FUTURE WORLD PEACE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, this afternoon I want to recognize the patriotism of our men and women of the Armed Forces who, halfway around the world in Afghanistan, in Iraq, and elsewhere, are in harm's way. They are brave, they care deeply about this country, so deeply they would lay down their lives for it, and have.

This is worth our reflection as we gather here in the comfort of this Chamber, air-conditioned on a hot day. We should take a moment to think about our troops, to stand in their boots, and to give our thanks. Our soldiers deserve our unqualified support, and in Congress we must do everything we can to make sure they have it, whatever they need to do their job, to do it quickly, to do it with a minimum loss of life, and to come home safely. Whether they are in Basra, Baghdad, Bagram, or Afghanistan, we stand by our troops.

War is cruel. Innocent lives are lost, families are devastated. We cannot but turn on the television to see graphically the horrors of war; some of our soldiers dying or dead, the loss of innocent civilian lives, some by errant bombs, others by the deliberate murder of Saddam's regime as it fired on those in the street.

What we do not often recognize, because it is not thrust in our living rooms or our consciousness, is another terrible truth that peace, too, can be cruel. The peace of Rwanda, where millions died as the world watched. The peace of Kosovo, where tens of thousands were ethnically cleansed before we acted without the approval of the United Nations. And the peace of Baghdad, too, was cruel. The peace of torture and rape, of starvation and repression, of a failed sanctions regime that Hussein used cynically to kill his own people. That, too, is cruel. And lastly, the peace of September 10 was cruel, holding the promise of a long and precious life for 3,000 Americans who would not live out the week.

Americans who oppose the war have many important points to make but must resist the temptation to merely attack the administration uncritically or nonconstructively, or to defend in

any manner the indefensible regime of Saddam Hussein. The failure to disarm Iraq peacefully, notwithstanding 17 resolutions of the United Nations, was not alone the United States' responsibility. It was a failure of the world body, of the United Nations, of the collective security of mankind.

Despite the intoxicating simplicity of the argument, the war in Iraq is not about American desire for oil, though our dependence on it is far too great. It is not about contracts for the French, although contracts they have. And it is not about debt to the Russians, although billions they are owed. Rather, it is about the post-Cold War failure to erect an edifice upon which the peace of the world can be built. And this problem, without our genuine reflection and determined effort, if left untended and ignored, if lost in the dilution of a simpler answer, may mean that Iraq is only the second in a long line of future conflicts.

When the war is over, more hard work lies ahead. We must not only rebuild the Nation of Iraq for the Iraqi people, but we must rebuild the institutions of the world community which have been devastated by the last few months of fractious debate at the United Nations. These two tasks, to restore Iraq and to restore the collective security apparatus of the world, must go hand in hand. Indeed, we need the one to help repair the other. The United Nations must play the pivotal role in the provision of food and medicine to the Iraqi people and assist in the administration of Iraq until that troubled land becomes a self-governing nation.

Many have argued that democracy is incompatible with the traditions and tribal rivalries of the Iraqi people, or that a nation drawn artificially together on a map must tear if not held together by the noxious glue of tyranny. We must not have such low aspirations for the Iraqi people who have great talents that have not been allowed to flourish, and we must never indulge in the prejudice that any people are less capable, less suited, or less deserving of democracy. Democracy is the institutional reflection of the God-given rights of liberty, belief, and expression.

Democracy must be nurtured beyond Iraq and Afghanistan. We must be unstinting in our support for democratic movements in authoritarian nations. Democracy must come not only to our adversaries but to our allies as well, to the Saudis, to the Egyptians, and to Jordan. We must work to open these closed societies and closed economies to free the creative talents of their peoples, to lift the standard of living and expose the germ of terrorism to the cleansing power of opportunity.

HOMELAND SECURITY PRIORITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise to address my colleagues on the immediate needs of protecting America, and especially protecting those who protect us.

This week, Congress will vote on an almost \$78 billion war supplemental budget, of which most of this funding will be delivered to ensure America's Armed Forces, those protecting our liberties abroad, to make sure that they have the tools that they need to end this conflict successfully and return home as soon as possible. I, like most of my colleagues, will support this legislation.

While I am pleased that Congress is addressing those Americans who are protecting us from attack abroad, I am concerned about the lack of funding for those brave Americans who are protecting us right here at home; namely, our first responders.

The term "first responder" is thrown around a lot here. But it does mean something. They are our local police, firefighters, and emergency medical workers. They are the ones who run towards crime scenes, not away. They are the ones who run into burning buildings and not away. And they run towards the injured and dying, remaining calm and administering treatment and care.

Since the devastating day of September 11, these people have been hailed in every corner of our great country. But oftentimes, a lot of the rhetoric we hear is simply just that. It is rhetoric. We heard some absurd rhetoric today from a very prominent Republican Member of Congress, but the Rules of the House do not allow me to distinguish which body he serves in, who said that the New York City police and firefighters should work overtime without pay as a sacrifice to the war effort. I guess he does not think the loss of 414 first responders in our fair city have sacrificed enough. Of course, this same gentleman has continually supported the Bush administration in opposing additional funding for our first responders, like so many Republicans have, while supporting a tax cut for the wealthiest in this country. What about calling upon them to sacrifice? The call to ask our first responders to make a sacrifice while not simultaneously calling about the wealthiest 5 percent in this country to make a sacrifice is ludicrous.

My district is home to many of these first responders. I am the son of a New York City police officer and a cousin to several police officers and New York City firefighters. My family knows and understands sacrifice. We also know lunacy when we hear it, and the comments made today are simply lunacy.

On 9/11, of the 414 of these first responders who were killed, the number includes 23 New York City police officers, and 343 members of the New York City Fire Department, of whom I knew more than just a few. I remember people lining the streets of New York to thank them, and we all heard every